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NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

22850 7590 01/29/2009

OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

RILEY, MARCUS T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2625

DATE MAILED: 01/29/2009

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/760,460	01/21/2004	Noriko Miyagi	247882US2	1371

TITLE OF INVENTION: IMAGE PROCESSING APPARATUS AND METHOD, AND COMPUTER PROGRAM PRODUCT

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	\$1510	\$300	\$0	\$1810	04/29/2009

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED. SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.

B. If the status above is to be removed, check box 5b on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or

B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check box 5a on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL, or its equivalent, must be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted. If an equivalent of Part B is filed, a request to reapply a previously paid issue fee must be clearly made, and delays in processing may occur due to the difficulty in recognizing the paper as an equivalent of Part B.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL

Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: **Mail Stop ISSUE FEE**
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INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 5 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note: Use Block 1 for any change of address)

22850 7590 01/29/2009

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1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

Note: A certificate of mailing can only be used for domestic mailings of the Fee(s) Transmittal. This certificate cannot be used for any other accompanying papers. Each additional paper, such as an assignment or formal drawing, must have its own certificate of mailing or transmission.

Certificate of Mailing or Transmission

I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

(Depositor's name)

(Signature)

(Date)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/760,460	01/21/2004	Noriko Miyagi	247882US2	1371

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nonprovisional	NO	\$1510	\$300	\$0	\$1810	04/29/2009

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
RILEY, MARCUS T	2625	358-001900

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).	2. For printing on the patent front page, list (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, (2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed.
<input type="checkbox"/> Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.	1_____
<input type="checkbox"/> "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. Use of a Customer Number is required.	2_____

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE _____ (B) RESIDENCE: (CITY AND STATE OR COUNTRY) _____

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent): Individual Corporation or other private group entity Government

4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:	4b. Payment of Fee(s): (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue Fee	<input type="checkbox"/> A check is enclosed.
<input type="checkbox"/> Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.
<input type="checkbox"/> Advance Order - # of Copies _____	<input type="checkbox"/> The Director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).

5. Change in Entity Status (from status indicated above)	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27.	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Applicant is no longer claiming SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27(g)(2).
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NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Authorized Signature _____ Date _____

Typed or printed name _____ Registration No. _____

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS; SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

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OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.				RILEY, MARCUS T
1940 DUKE STREET				ART UNIT
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314				PAPER NUMBER
				2625
				DATE MAILED: 01/29/2009

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b)

(application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment to date is 853 day(s). If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the Patent Term Adjustment will be 853 day(s).

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/760,460	MIYAGI ET AL.
	Examiner MARCUS T. RILEY	Art Unit 2625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to the amendment received by the Office on 09/16/2008.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,3-7,9-14,16-18 and 20-23.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 04/13/2004;05/01/2006; 11/08/2007;
10/23/2008
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

/Marcus T Riley/
Examiner, Art Unit 2625

/Edward L. Coles/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2625

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. This office action is responsive to the applicant's remarks received on September 16, 2008. Before this amendment, claims 1-23 were pending. Claims 2, 8, 15 & 19 have been cancelled and claims 1, 3-7, 9-14, 16-18 & 20-23 have been fully considered and are persuasive.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to amended claims 1, 11, 14, 18 & 23 filed on September 16, 2008 have been fully considered and are persuasive.

Claim Rejections

3. See Applicant's Arguments, page 9-13, filed September 16, 2008, with respect to claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103, have been fully considered and are persuasive. Claims 1, 3-7, 9-18, & 20-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103. In light of the amendments presented, applicant has also cancelled claim 15. Thus, claims 2, 8, 15 & 19 are withdrawn from consideration. As a result, Examiner withdraws the 103 rejection for claims 1, 3-7, 9-18 & 20-23. Furthermore, claims 1 & 14 have been amended as independent form to include limitations of base and intervening claims. In light of the amendments presented, Examiner withdraws the 103 rejections for independent claims 1 & 14 and claims 3-7, 9-13, 16-18 and 20-23 dependent therefrom.

In view of the formal amendment submitted by applicant, claims 1 & 14 have been amended as independent form to include limitations of base intervening claims. Accordingly claims 1 & 14 are now considered to be allowable subject matter to include claims 3-7, 9-13, 16-18 and 20-23 dependent therefrom.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1, 3-7, 9-14, 16-18 & 20-23 are allowed.
5. The following is Examiners statement of reasons for allowance:

Independent claim 1 uniquely identify the distinct features of an image processing apparatus which includes a communication unit configured to exchange data with an external device, an attribute determination unit, an embedding unit, and a storage unit. The image processing apparatus, includes: a communication unit configured to exchange data with an external device; an attribute determination unit that determines an image attribute of a first image signal on a pixel by pixel basis to generate a dot identification signal and a black-character identification signal; an embedding unit that embeds the black-character identification signal in the first image signal in a predetermined format to obtain a second image signal; a storage unit that stores the second image signal including the dot identification signal and the black character identification signal, wherein the second image signal is transmitted to the external device through the communication unit and the dot identification signal is deleted; an extractor that extracts the black-character identification signal from the second image signal; and an image processor that performs predetermined image processing on the second image signal stored, based on the dot identification signal stored and black-character identification signal extracted.

Independent claim14 uniquely identify the distinct features of an image processing method wherein the method includes: determining an image attribute of a first image signal on a pixel by pixel basis to generate an attribute signal indicating the image attribute; embedding the

attribute signal in the first image signal in a predetermined format to obtain a second image signal; storing the attribute signal and one of the first image signal and the second image signal; transmitting the second image signal to an external device; deleting the dot identification signal from the second image signal; extracting the attribute signal from the second image signal; performing predetermined image processing on one of the first image signal and the second image signal that are stored in the storage unit, based on at least one of the attribute signal stored and the attribute signal extracted, to generate a dot identification signal and a black-character identification signal; embedding the black-character identification signal in the first image signal in a predetermined format; including in the first image signal in the predetermined format the black-character identification signal and the dot identification signal; extracting at least one of the black-character identification signal and the dot identification signal from the first image signal in the predetermined format, and performing predetermined image processing on the first image signal in the predetermined format, based on the black-character identification signal extracted and the dot identification signal stored.

The closest prior art made of record with regards to the Examiner's 103 rejections includes: Matsumoto et al. US 6,647,125, either alone or in combination with Nakajima (US 6,650,437.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue and fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MARCUS T. RILEY whose telephone number is (571)270-1581. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 7:30-5:00, est.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David K. Moore can be reached on 571-272-7437. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Marcus T. Riley
Assistant Examiner
Art Unit 2625

/Marcus T Riley/
Examiner, Art Unit 2625

/Edward L. Coles/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2625